

States of Micronesia, the Republic of Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

Corals serve myriad ecosystem functions, which include serving as a source of food, a place for recreation and tourism, a source for coastal protection, and an important part of local cultural practices, to name a few. A number of studies have been conducted to place a monetary value on the importance of coral reef ecosystems in Hawaii. A U.S. Geological Survey, USGS, study published in 2019 estimated the flood protection value of coral reefs in Hawaii alone at \$836 million annually. When accounting for all U.S. coral reefs, so those in the waters of Hawaii, Florida, Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the same study estimated the flood protection value to increase to \$1.8 billion. Another study published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, in 2011 estimated the total economic value of Hawaii coral reefs to the American people to be \$33.57 billion. There is no doubt the importance of corals to our Nation.

Unfortunately, there are currently a number of variables that are threatening the health of our Nation's coral reefs. These variables include climate change-driven warming of ocean temperatures and ocean acidification, unsustainable fishing, and pollution. As a result of global bleaching events and disease outbreaks corals are projected to decline significantly over the coming decades.

In an effort to mitigate the impacts of declining coral health, this no-cost bill prioritizes programs that address communities, environments, or industries that are in distress due to the decline or degradation of coral reef ecosystems. Allowing Federal Agencies on the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force to enter into private-public partnerships via prize competitions, as this bill does, will allow for the advancement of innovative research that will advance our Nation's ability to preserve, sustain, and restore coral reef ecosystems.

Time is running out to ensure that coral reef ecosystems remain the vibrant habitats that so many aspects of our society's functioning have come to rely upon. Innovative solutions at no extra cost to the American people, such as those supported by this bill, are desperately needed to reverse the damage that our Nation's coral reef ecosystems have experienced over the past decades to ensure that they will be around to benefit Americans in the coming decades.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 5202. A bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to strengthen adult education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we have a longstanding adult literacy crisis that

affects the quality of life for individuals and families and holds our economy back. It is time for a major expansion of adult education. Today, I am proud to introduce bipartisan legislation—the Adult Education Workforce Opportunity and Reskilling for Knowledge and Success Act, or the Adult Education WORKS Act—with my colleague Senator YOUNG.

Adult education provides numeracy, literacy, digital literacy, English language skills, work readiness, soft skills, high school equivalency, and numerous wraparound services to millions of adult learners nationwide—all essential skills. They can be the difference between earning a family-sustaining wage and struggling to make ends meet. A study commissioned by the Barbara Bush Foundation estimated that getting all U.S. adults to the equivalent of a sixth grade reading level would generate an additional \$2.2 trillion in annual income for the country. Without the opportunities provided through adult education programs, many adults will be left on the sidelines.

According to recent National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, data, 43 million adults are low-skilled in literacy and 62.7 million adults are low-skilled in numeracy. Building a sustainable economy that truly works for everyone is going to require helping these individuals acquire the basic skills they need to succeed. Unfortunately, we are reaching only a fraction of these individuals today. According to the Department of Education, at current funding levels, adult education programs only serve about 1.1 million people, and an estimated one-third of local adult education providers have waiting lists.

The Adult Education WORKS Act provides a roadmap for addressing this crisis. It calls for increased resources, doubling funding for adult education by 2026. At the same time, it makes significant improvements to the adult education system. It calls for a new emphasis on digital and information literacy, which are critical for success in the workplace and in navigating everyday life. It enhances the role of adult education providers, with a special focus on public libraries and community-based organizations, throughout the workforce development system, ensuring coordination and efficient use of resources. It invests in the professionalization of the adult education field, strengthening State certification policies, encouraging full-time staffing models, and expanding professional development opportunities and career pathways for adult educators. It provides support for college and career navigators in public libraries and community-based organizations to support adult learners where they live. Finally, it invests in innovation and accountability through pilot projects that test new approaches to measuring program performance and learner outcomes.

In developing this legislation, Senator YOUNG and I worked closely with key stakeholders working on the frontlines in the adult education community. I am pleased to count the American Library Association, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education, the National Coalition for Literacy, ProLiteracy, and TESOL among the supporters of this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and work with us to ensure it is part of any legislation to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

### SENATE RESOLUTION 862—CALLING FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE BIASED UNITED NATIONS INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM, AND ISRAEL

Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. HAGERTY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 862

Whereas, shortly after the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) launched an open-ended investigation into the actions of Israel during the conflict;

Whereas the investigation, which serves to discredit the only Jewish state, is likely to further fuel anti-Semitism worldwide;

Whereas the mandate of the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (referred to in this preamble as the "Commission") is to investigate in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and Israel all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since April 13, 2021;

Whereas the creation of the Commission is consistent with the continued bias of the UNHRC against Israel and the disproportionate use of resources in an ongoing campaign to disparage, discredit, and denounce Israel;

Whereas, on October 16, 2021, after the United States was reelected to the UNHRC, Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that the UNHRC "suffers from serious flaws, including disproportionate attention on Israel" and that the United States and other countries "must push back against attempts to subvert the ideals upon which the Human Rights Council was founded";

Whereas, on March 28, 2022, Senator Cardin and Senator Portman led a bipartisan group of 68 Senators in a letter urging the Biden administration to prioritize reversing the discriminatory and unwarranted treatment of Israel by the UNHRC by leading a multinational effort in the UNHRC and in the United Nations to end the Commission;

Whereas the Commission released a report on June 7, 2022, stating that "the continued occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory and discrimination against Palestinians are the key root causes of the recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict in the region";